The Poetry Place
June, 1967

Typed by ct, 3/17/67

THE INLET

by Louise Glück

Words fail me. The ocean travelling stone
Returns turquoise; small animals twinkle in a haze
Of weed as this or that sequence
Of pod rattles with complete delicacy on the rotten vine.
I know what's slipping through my fingers.
In Hatteras the stones were oiled with mud.
The sunset leaked like steakblood,
Sank, and my companion weaved his fingers
Through my fingers. Wood's Hole,
Edgartown, the Vineyard in the rain,
The Vineyard not in the rain, the rain
Fuming like snow in Worcester, like gas in the coal
Country. Grass and goldenrod come to me,
Milkweed covers me over, and reed. But this riddle
Has no name: I saw a blind baby try
To fix its fists in tendrils
Of its mother's hair, and get air. The air burns,
The seaweed's hissing in its cistern...

Waveside, beside earth's edge
Before the toward-death cartwheel of the sun,

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I dreamed I was afraid, and through the din
Of birds, the din, the hurricane of parting sedge
Came to the danger lull.
The white weeds, all waves' white
Scalps dissolve in the obliterating light.
And only I, Shadrach, come back alive and well.